

Grammatical construction of the Ho language.—By Lieut. TICKELL.

I hope due allowances will be made for the imperfectness of the grammatical details here given, when it is remembered that the Ho language has no written character, nor does there exist a person, native of the Kolehan or otherwise, who could give me the slightest assistance on this point.

It would be trite to observe that grammar is as inherent and essential to all languages, even the most barbarous, as a vocabulary itself. By first learning a number of the words and sentences arbitrarily, the system on which they are founded may be detected in due time by patient comparisons of them, even when the speakers themselves are unable to give the inquirer the least information on the construction of what they are saying. With this difficulty once mastered, it is inconceivable with what ease the most (apparently) complex and difficult languages become familiar.

The sounds of the Ho language are exceedingly pure and liquid, without strong aspirates or gutturals, and may be well rendered by the English alphabet, or still better the French one, as that admits of the slight nasal inflection which prevails in many words in the Ho dialect.

Let the following conventions be made to the sound of the vowels, in the ensuing dialogues, &c.

á —————	as in	“father,”	“rather,”
é —————	„	“prey,”	“été,”
ī —————	„	“skip,”	“trip,”
ee —————	„	“sheep,”	“peep,”
ȳ —————	„	“fly,”	“try,”
aĩ or aỹ —	„	longer sound as in “aye, aye?”	
ō —————	„	“bone,”	“stone,”
oo —————	„	“fool,”	“stool,”
* _n (nasal n)	„	“Ton”	“Fanfaron,” (French.)

The long acute vowel sounds, such as *oo* and *ee*, also the letter *r*, are pronounced too liquidly and subtly to be easily imitated by a stranger, and in some words the inflections of the vowels are inconceivably complex and mellifluous. The general euphony or cadence

* Also *g*, as the French liquid *g*, in Coulogne, Boulogne.

of the language is sprightly and cheerful; if the subject be of a complaining nature it subsides into a strange chaunt, the sentences being linked together by such see-saw sounds, as "ná-do na-do enété ná-do" which have no meaning, but serve to connect together the speaker's ideas.

When two or more words come together, the former ending, and the latter beginning with similar vowels, they are joined by ellipsis. as "Hola'lé seniéna," instead of "Hola allé seniéna," *we went yesterday*.

ARTICLE.

There are none, (properly speaking), definite or indefinite.

NOUN.

There is no distinction of genders; marked or influenced by termination, it being determined by the sense or meaning of the word, whether referring to a *male* or *female* being. Besides *man* and *woman*, "erril" and "èra," *boy* and *girl*, "koá" and "koóee," names of relations, and those of a few domestic animals, all other nouns are distinguished in their gender by prefixing "Sandee" *male*, or "Enga" *female*, as in Persian or English مادن رینچ نر رینچ *he-bear, she-bear*.

A noun has three numbers, singular, dual, and plural, as in Greek.

The nouns can scarcely be said to have declension as the terminal does not vary either according to number or case, although a distinguishing adjunct, which may be called a 'Pronoun article,' from its nature and use, is added.

Singular.	Dual.	Plural.
Nom. Sètá, <i>a dog</i> .	Seta king, <i>two dogs</i> .	Sèta ko, <i>dogs</i> .
Gen. Sètá-á, <i>of a dog</i> .	Seta kingya, <i>of two dogs</i> .	Seta koá, <i>of dogs</i> .
Ab. Seta-té, <i>from a dog</i> .	Seta king té, <i>from two dogs</i> .	Setako té, <i>from dogs</i> .

The dative, accusative, and vocative cases do not differ from the nominative, being only known from their position in a sentence.

In composition, the noun in an accusative case takes the first place in the sentence, if the nominative be a pronoun; otherwise the noun-nominative precedes, the accusative follows, and the oblique or dative case comes immediately before the verb, sometimes immediately after it. "En ho kajikeeáí áya èra," *that man said to his wife*, "Dendka

oé tootigoikeea," *Dendka shot the bird.* "Eeán hōn do chowlee seta emadā," *my son gave the dog some rice.*

ADJECTIVE.

The adjective does not alter in termination, either in number, case, or gender; and always precedes the noun it qualifies. As "Boogee ho," *a good man*; "Boogee ho-á," *of a good man*; "Boogee ho lo té," *with a good man*, &c. There are no degrees of comparison, but as in Hindustani the qualifying words *very*, or *most of all*, are prefixed to denote grades of quality, as "Etká," *bad*, "Ená té neeá o etka," *this is worse than that*. "Sabee ré nee o etka minna," *this is worst of all*. "Boogee lèka èra," *a pretty woman*. "Boogee lèka èra ko," *pretty women*.

PRONOUN.

The first personal pronoun has four numbers, the singular, dual, plural, and plural comprehensive. The others only the three first, as noticed in the noun-substantives.

The possessive pronouns are the same as the personal, with the genitive inflection *á* added.

PERSONAL PRONOUNS.

Singular.	Dual.	Plural.	Pl. comprehensive.
1st. Eeng or aing, <i>I</i>	Alleeng, <i>we two</i>	Allé, <i>we</i>	Aboo, <i>we all</i>
2d. Um, <i>thou</i>	Abben, <i>you two</i>	Appé, <i>you</i>	„
3d. Aÿ or áyo, <i>he</i>	Aking, <i>they two</i>	Ako, <i>they</i>	„

In speaking, if the person include the person addressed, himself, and every one present, as nominatives or agents, he uses the plural comprehensive. If he exclude the person addressed, he employs the first person plural, as "Hola aboo seniéna," *yesterday we went* (i. e. you and all of us.) "Hola allé seniéna," *yesterday we went* (i. e. not you, we alone.)

The personal pronouns in the nominative case both precede and terminate the verb, optionally with the speaker, as, *I speak*, "Eeng kajitanna" or "Eeng kajitannaing" or "Kajitannaing."

I go, "Eeng senotana," or "Eeng senotannaing," or "Senotannaing."

And to give energy to the sentence, the pronoun is repeated, with the connect "do" between them, as "Eeng do eeng kajitanna," *T'is I who speak*, "Um do um kombookenna," *Thou alone statest it*.

The most difficult part of their construction is in the dative and accusative cases, which are absorbed in the verbs they are governed by, in a manner unknown to other languages, being placed in the centre of the verb, after the root, and before the tense terminal.

As, *I speak to thee*, "Eeng kajimetanna;" *he spoke to me*, "áyo kajikedingia;" *he spoke to them*, "kajiked koäi;" *the tiger saw me* "koola do neldedingia;" *he killed him*, "áyo goikedáya." Here I have underlined the oblique or accusative pronoun, where it comes in, just before the tense terminal of the verb.

POSSESSIVE PRONOUNS.

Singular.	Dual.	Plural.	Pl. comp.
1st. Eenga* or áingia ! <i>my</i>	alleengia	alléa	abooá
2d. Umma, <i>thy</i>	abbena	appéa	„
3d. Aya, <i>his</i>	akingia	akoá	„

These always precede their substantives.

DEMONSTRATIVE PRONOUNS.

Singular.	Dual.	Plural.
Nee or inee, <i>this</i>	neeking, <i>these two</i>	niko, <i>these</i>
Neeá or ineeá, <i>of this</i>	neekingia, <i>of these two</i>	neekoá. <i>of these</i>
Neeté or ineeté, <i>to, with, &c. this</i>	neekingté,	neekoté,

En, <i>that</i>	enking, <i>those two</i>	enko, <i>those</i>
Ená, <i>of that</i>	enkingá, <i>of those two</i>	enkoá, <i>of those</i>
Enté, <i>by, from, with &c. that</i>	enkingté,	enkoté,

"Nee" *this*, is sometimes used idiomatically by a person referring to himself. If a Kole were to be asked what countryman he was? he would answer, "Ho nee gé," *I am*; or literally, *this is a Kole*. Of what clan are you? Answer, "Poortee neegé," *I am a Poortee*.

* Pronounced, as 'mignon,' 'Ligne,' &c. in French.

INTERROGATIVE PRONOUNS.

Okoï, <i>who?</i>	chikan, <i>which?</i>	chiá, <i>what?</i>
Okoíá, <i>whose?</i>	chikaná, <i>of which?</i>	

RELATIVE PRONOUNS.

Relative pronouns are very vague, the sentence being generally so rendered as to obviate the necessity of them, thus, instead of saying, *The man who went*; a Kole would say, *The gone man*, "Senien Horo."

But at times "Chikana," *whatever*, and "Ena," *that*, are used relatively, as "Chikana um kajeeá, èna eeng áiooma," *what you say, that I will listen to*.

VERBS.

Verbs are either active or neuter. There is no passive voice.

The Infinitive mood is formed by adding *téá* to the root.

The Present participle by adding *tan* or *té*.

The Past participle by affixing *kedté*.

In the active or transitive voice, the Present tense Indicative mood, adds to the root "*tanna*," in the neuter voice, "*akanna*."

The Imperfect tense there is none, the Present tense being used, and its Imperfect signification understood by the context.

The Perfect tense is formed by adding in the active voice, "*kidda*, *keea*, *kenna*, *lidda*, or *tadda*," to the root. In the neuter voice, "*lena*," or "*ièna*," sometimes "*kenna*."

There is no Pluperfect tense, but greater completion is expressed by conjugating the verb "*chabteá*," *to finish*, added to the root; much the same way as "*chookna*" in Hindustanee.

The Future is formed by adding to the root *eea* or *oá*, or sometimes simply *á*, in which latter case the sound of the root is prolonged. Except "*nooitéá*," *to drink*, which makes "*noonooá*;" and "*roteá*," *to gore* (as a bull) "*roroá*."

The Imperative is formed by adding (in the 2nd person singular) to the root, "*mèn*" and "*omén*" or "*ýmén*," if the root end with a consonant. In the other persons *ká* precedes the pronoun, and the simple root of the verb, which will be more clearly shown in conjugating. In a negative sense, "*alum*" or "*alo*" is prefixed to the 2nd personal pronoun, *á* being added to the root; if in the 3rd person, singular, dual,

or plural "*aloka*" is prefixed to the pronoun, and the root alone of the verb is used.

The Subjunctive mood is vague and imperfect. In the Present, and Future tenses "*rèdo*" is added to the root, sometimes together with the word "*honang*," "*derang*," or "*torá*" (signifying conditionality) affixed.

The Past tense is formed in the same way; indeed there appears to be no Past Subjunctive tense; but sometimes the conditional terminal "*rèdo*" is added to the Past perfect Indicative.

This word "*rèdo*" admits the vowel to be affixed to it, or to come immediately before it and after the root.

Conjugation of the verb "*Kajëeteá*," *to speak*.

INFINITIVE MOOD.

Present tense—*Kajëeteá, to speak,*

Present Participle—*Kajitan, or Kajienté, speaking,*

Past Participle—*Kajikedté, having spoken.*

INDICATIVE MOOD.

Present tense.

	Sing.		Dual.	Plural.
1st. Person,	Aïng,	} Kajitanna,	Alleeng—Allé,	} Kajitanna, <i>I &c. am speaking.</i>
2d. ,,	Um,		Abben—Appé,	
3d. ,,	Aÿo,		Aking—Ako,	

Perfect tense.

1st.	Aïng—Alleeng—Allé,	} Kajikidda, Kajilidda or Kajitadda. <i>I &c. spoke or have spoken.</i>
2d.	Um— Abben—Appé,	
3d.	Aÿo— Aking— Ako,	

Future tense.

Aïng, Um, &c. &c. &c.—*Kajeeá, I &c. &c. will speak.*

IMPERATIVE MOOD.

	Sing.		Dual.	Plural.
Eeng	Kakajee, <i>Let me speak.</i>	} <i>Let him speak,</i>	Kajeeaboo or Abookakajee,	<i>Let us all, &c.</i>
Um	Kajeemén, <i>Speak thou.</i>		Kajee ben or Abbenkakajee,	<i>Speak you, &c.</i>
Ayo	Kakajee or		Kajeealling or Allingkakajee,	<i>Let us, &c.</i>
Kakajee	o kái,		Kajeeallé or Alléokakajee,	<i>Let us, &c.</i>
			Kajeeako or Akokakajee,	<i>Let them, &c.</i>
			Kajeeaking or Akingkakajee,	<i>Let them, &c.</i>

NEGATIVE.

Sing.

Dual. Plural.

Alokáing kajeea, *Do not let me speak.*Alum kájeea, *Speak not.*Alo kaï kajeea, *Do not let him speak.*

Alo k'aboo kajeea.

Alo k'allé kajeea.

Alla'bben kajeea.

Al'appé kajeea.

Alo ka'ko kajeea.

Alo ka'king kajeea }

Do not let us
&c. &c.
speak.

SUBJUNCTIVE MOOD.

*Present tense.*Eeng Kajeerèdo, *If I speak.*Um Kajeeredo, *If thou speakest.*Aio Kjeeredo, *If he speak.*

Aboo,

Allé,

Abben,

Appé,

Ako,

Aking, }

Kajeerèdo, *If we &c. speak.**Perfect or Pluperfect.*Eeng, Um, &c. &c. &c. Kajeekedrèdo, *If I &c. &c. had spoken.*

CONDITIONAL, OR POTENTIAL.

Eeng Kajeäing honang, *I would speak.*Um Kajeelum honang, *Thou, &c.*Ayo Kajea honang, *He, &c.*Allé &c. &c. Kajea honang,
We might or would speak.

NOTE. As has been before explained, in all these tenses and persons (except in the Imperative) the pronoun may be either prefixed, or affixed, or both.

The same Verb, Conjugated with its Objective Pronoun.

INDICATIVE.

*Present tense.*Eeng or Aying Kajeing tanna, *I speak to myself.*,, Kaje metanna, *I speak to thee.*,, Kaje áitanna, *I speak to him.*,, Kaje' létanna, *I speak to ourselves.*,, Kaje' ling tanna, *I speak to us two.*,, Kaje' ben tanna, *I speak to you two.*,, Kaje' pétanna, *I speak to you.*,, Kaje king tanna, *I speak to them two.*,, Kaje kotanna, *I speak to them.*

The same exactly for all the other persons, and tenses, &c.

Perfect tense.

Aĩng, Um, Aỹó, &c. &c. &c.	{	Kajikedingiá.	I, thou, he, &c. &c. &c.	{	spoke to myself.
		Kajiked'miá.			spoke to thee.
		Kajikedáíá.			spoke to him.
		Kajikede'lia.			spoke to ourselves.
		Kajiked'lingia.			spoke to us two.
		Kajiked'bena.			spoke to you two.
		Kajikedpéá.			spoke to you.
		Kajikedkingiá			spoke to them two.
		Kajiked'koa.			spoke to them.

Examples of this construction, especially in the Imperative mood, will be given in the Vocabulary, so need not be further dwelt on here.

It is scarcely possible to reduce the verb “to be” to conjugation, unless we suppose the varied forms in which it is used as inflections of separate verbs, wanting in many tenses. For “to be” is expressed by different verbs, according to its allusion to time, a person, or a thing; and again as whether it relate to mere existence or nature of existence. In short, there is no auxiliary verb “to be” which can be independently conjugated. The unchangable word “minna,” or “minnakana,” is applicable in the present tense alone, to denote a *state* of existence, as “Eeng, um, aỹó, &c. minna, or minnakana,” *I am, thou art, he is, &c.* But in past and future tenses some other verb denoting *presence*, as the verb “to come,” “to reside” &c. must be employed.

But the verb “to be,” when implying the *nature* of existence, can be rendered in the past and future tenses, as well as the present, by adding to the participle or adjective, *oá* in the future, and *iena* in the past, as “eeng laga akanna,” *I am tired*; “eeng lagaoá,” *I shall be tired*; “eeng lágièna,” *I have become tired*; “eeng rënga akanna, or renga akannaing,” *I am hungry*; “eeng rengaoá or rengaoing,” *I shall be hungry*; “eeng rengaièna,” *I was hungry*. *Oá* and *iena*, it is to be remembered, are inflections of the future and past tenses in all neuter verbs.

Again the verb “to be” can be simply represented in the future and past tenses, when speaking of a *thing*, by the word “hobawa,” *it shall or will be*, and “hobiena,” *it has been*; also in the present, “hobow-tanna,” *it is*. This mode of expression commonly refers to the success

or accomplishment of any project. In the English idiom we should say for "hobawa" *it will do, or it will answer*; "hobiena," *it is all over, or has succeeded*; "hobowtanna," *it is going on.*

That boy will be a thief, could not be rendered "En koá do komboo hobawa," but "En koá do komboo oá."

Your business will be done to-morrow, not "Umma kajee gappa oá," but, "Umma kajee gappa hobawa."

This will never do, "Ka hobawa;" *go away, it is all over* "Mar-senomén hobiéna."

In English and other languages, state, nature, or condition, is rendered by affixing or prefixing the various tenses of the verb "*to be*" to the adjective, as *to be hungry, I am hungry, I was hungry*; "*to be glad, I am glad, &c. &c.*" But in the Ho dialect the adjective itself becomes a neuter verb, and is conjugated by affixing to it the different inflections denoting time and mood—*to be hungry, "rengatéá;" I am hungry, "renga akannaing;" I was hungry, "rengaiénaing;" &c.*

NEUTER VERBS.

After what has been said, it would be unnecessary to give any example of the conjugation of neuter verbs. It only requires to be remembered that their present terminal is "akanna" instead of "tanna;" and their past inflection "iëna," instead of "kidda, tadda, lidda, or eea," all of which latter are transitive forms.

Some verbs are both neutral and transitive, as "Chabateá" *to finish*. They have therefore both inflections. In the transitive form "Chabatea" is frequently added to the root of some other verb, to denote completion; but it may also be used alone: in the neuter form, it is of course confined to the third person.

EXAMPLES.

Yōmchabakiddaí, *He eat it all up.*

Bÿchabakidallé, *We finished (making) it.*

Kajeechabÿmén, *Finish speaking.*

Gappa miang chabawa, *It will be done to-morrow or next day.*

Nádo chabiéna, *It is now finished.*

The word "Hereá" is placed between the root and terminal of a verb to denote positiveness or certainty; as when the speaker means

to state something as an incontrovertible fact, as, "Kajee hereákiddaï," *most assuredly he spoke*. "Oodoob hereámén," *speak positively*.

The causal form is rendered by putting "chee" between the root and terminal—as "landateá," *to laugh*, makes "landacheeteá" *to cause to laugh*; "aïoomtea," *to hear*, "aïoomcheetea," *to cause to hear*, as in Hindustani *á* is inserted (with a few exceptions) for the same purpose, as Hunsna, Hunsána; Soonna, Soonána, &c.

Continuity (in the Imperative mood alone) is expressed by adding "akán" to the root, as "doobmén" *sit down*, "doobakánmen," *remain sitting*; "Aïoom mén," *listen*, "Aïoomakánmén," *continue listening*.

Finally, the thoroughly performing an act, is often rendered by adding the verb, "jōmetea," *to eat*, to the root of the expletive verb, as "nel-joomkidallé," *we all saw it (thoroughly)*; "aïoomjōmmén," *listen (attentively)*; "Geetee jōm-meén," *sleep (soundly)*. And should the verb be of a violent nature (referring to some violent act) the particle "táb" between the root and inflection gives force to the meaning, as "Goïtabkiddaï," *he slew him (outright)*; "Toltab kidallé," *we bound him (forthwith)*; "Neertabmén," *Run (quickly) fly!* so "Ooiteá" is *to jump*, and "Ooitabtea," *to bound (as a tiger)*.

Ká before the pronoun gives the verb a negative form, as has been before explained in describing the Imperative mood.

There is no verb "*to have*," possession being denoted in the same manner as in Hindustani, *I have*, "Eengtra minna"—"*Méré pas hýe*."

From the foregoing remarks may be gathered, that in the active or transitive voice

The present terminal is, "Tanna."

The past, "Kidda, tadda, lidda, kenna or keea."

In the Neuter Voice.

The present terminal is, "akénna."

The past, "ièna or lèna ;"

In Either Voice.

The conditional, subjunctive, } "redo" or "kedrado,"
or potential mood terminate in }

all these terminals being of course subject to the inflections of their pronouns, which are, as has been said, as often affixed as prefixed.

A nondescript species of Verb is used in rendering the sentence
 “*what shall or can, I, (thou, he, &c.) do ?*”

Future and Present.

Ch'eeng chikyā,	} <i>what shall or can</i>	} <i>I,</i>	} <i>do ?</i>
Chee'm chikya,			
Chee chikyā,			
Cheeboo chikya,			
Chee'lé chikya,			
Chee'pé chikyā,			
Chee'ben chikyā,			
Chee'ko chikyā,			
Chee'king chikyā,			
Chee'ling chikyā,			
		} <i>Thou,</i>	}
		} <i>He,</i>	}
		} <i>We all,</i>	}
		} <i>We,</i>	}
		} <i>You,</i>	}
		} <i>You two,</i>	}
		} <i>They,</i>	}
		} <i>They two,</i>	}
		} <i>We two,</i>	}

Past tense.

Chee'ng chikakidda, *what could I have done ? &c. &c. &c.*

The verb “*to be able*” is rendered by “Dytea” in its moods and tenses, as, “Niádo eeng bȳdȳa,” *I can make this ; “Umdokadȳa,” you cannot ; “K'ái dȳoá,” he will not be able.*

Many little exceptions and variations occur to these general rules, which it would be impossible to become familiar with, without constant practice in their arbitrary use ; but the foregoing remarks comprise all that would be of practical utility. The constant elision and confluence of words beginning and ending with vowels must be remembered, and that the particle *do*, has no meaning whatever. This will render the examples above given to the different rules simple and illustrative.

NOTE.—The Vocabulary, and Dialogues in the Ho language will be published in No. 107. I have had 50 copies extra of the Grammatical construction, Vocabulary, and Dialogues of the Ho language struck off, and shall be happy to distribute them (gratis) to parties desiring to have them.